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6-10-1947

## John R. Steelman to Senator James O. Eastland, 10 June 1947

John Roy Steelman

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THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

JUN 10 1947

*See*

Dear Senator Eastland:

Since the receipt of your letter of June 6 concerning the shipment of American cotton to Japan I have had my staff get in touch with representatives of the War Department and the Department of Agriculture who have been working on the problem. I am advised that these representatives have now reached an informal agreement which is now in the process of being finalized. They have every hope that it will go through without difficulty in the near future. They are aware of my interest in the matter and we will be advised if a further conference in my office is necessary. You can rest assured that if difficulties do develop I will make sure that they are resolved promptly.

With kindest regards,

Sincerely,

*John R. Steelman*  
JOHN R. STEELMAN  
Assistant to the President

Honorable James O. Eastland  
United States Senate



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June 6, 1947

SPECIAL MESSENGER

Dr. John R. Steelman  
The White House  
Washington, D. C.

Dear Dr. Steelman:

There has been a snarl in the negotiations between the War Department and the Department of Agriculture over financing the shipment of American cotton to Japan. This market for American cotton is very necessary for the economy of the South and in my judgment the solution of the tangle in financing the exports of our cotton is just as important as any problem on the domestic front.

On last Saturday we agreed with the Secretary of Agriculture, officials in the War Department and Mr. Goodloe, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Reconstruction Finance Corporation, at the request of Mr. Goodloe to meet with you at some time that is convenient with you for the purpose of ironing out this controversy. In case the Commodity Credit Corporation does not desire to finance the export of American cotton the Reconstruction Finance Corporation has informed me that it will finance these transactions, and it was Mr. Goodloe's intention to meet with you. All the Senators from the cotton states met in a caucus several weeks ago and appointed a committee of Senators to attempt to save the Japanese market for the American cotton producer. The committee is composed of Senators Maybank, Sparkman, Knowland, Kem and the writer. It was the intention of the committee to also meet with all the parties at this conference. We requested the conference as outlined above and you declined to meet with us. I am informed through a good friend of yours that you stated that you would ask Agriculture and the Army to get together on the terms of the financing arrangement. The Army and the Department of Agriculture are at loggerheads; no agreement has been reached and, in fact, this matter is now in a worse mess than it has ever been. As a result we are faced with the prospect of a shutdown or a slowdown by Japanese textile mills and the loss of the export market of thousands of bales of the 1947 American cotton crop. The question of financing should be a simple one; however, the matter has now been hanging fire for several months and if not settled, Indian and Brazilian cotton will supplant American cotton in the Japanese textile industry.

I know you are very busy but I feel that if you had met with all the parties involved as we requested, this matter would have been settled. Our committee does not desire to attend the conference, but



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we feel that if the matter is to be settled it is necessary that you exert pressure on the parties.

You have always been very cooperative and sympathetic with our problems and have handled them in a very efficient manner. We are grateful to you for the courtesies which you have extended us and we believe if you would call the parties in as originally contemplated, you could settle this matter in a very short time.

With best wishes and personal regards, I am

Sincerely,

U. S. S.

JOE:NS